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Friday, November 21, 2008

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Man charged in day care marijuana operation waives hearing

Posted by For The Saginaw News November 21, 2008 07:35AM

ITHACA -- The man charged with growing marijuana at an Arcada Township daycare center last month has waived his preliminary hearing in Gratiot County District Court.

Andrew Perram, 25, was bound over for arraignment this week in Gratiot County Circuit Court before Judge Michelle Rick. Prosecutors charged him with one count of manufacturing marijuana, a four-year felony, Gratiot County Prosecutor Keith Kushion said.

Perram remains free on bond.

The Michigan State Aviation Team and members of the Mid-Michigan Area Group Narcotics Enforcement Team spotted seven marijuana plants growing at his mother's home and day care facility where he was living during an "Operation Hemp" flyover in August.

They confiscated the plants and executed a search of the home where police found a loaded gun with one bullet in the chamber.

Perram's mother was not charged because she "had no knowledge of the items," Kushion said.

He and MAGNET officers, however, have notified state daycare licensing authorities.

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Dore found not guilty in domestic violence case

Posted by [alpayne](#) November 21, 2008 09:46AM



Dan Staudacher | Times Photo
Arthur P. Dore consults with his attorney, Matthew L. Reyes, during the second day of his misdemeanor domestic violence trial in 74th District Court.

BREAKING NEWS:

Bay City entrepreneur Arthur P. Dore was found not guilty today after a jury deliberated for a short time on day three of his misdemeanor domestic violence trial in Bay County District Court.

Dore took the stand on Thursday testifying that he hit his girlfriend of 11 years, but only in self defense.

Dore, 72, told the seven-member jury how the alleged victim became angry at a June 26 event in Freeland after seeing him talking to another woman. She took that anger out on him as he drove his Hummer down US-10 and Interstate 75, he said, describing in court how she was yelling at him and punching him with her fist.

He stretched out his right arm to show those in Judge Timothy J. Kelly's courtroom how he was "holding her off" while trying to calm her down.

"Finally, I just took the back of my hand and hit her and kind of stunned her a little," Dore said. "I did not mean to hurt her and I didn't hit her that hard."

Dore testified that he then pulled over to make sure she was OK, and then took her home and dropped her off in her driveway. He said he was unaware of any injuries she may have had.

"She was not knocked unconscious," Dore said. "She was dazed. I certainly did not mean to hurt her at all. I was just trying to stop her from maybe causing a huge accident."

Dore later was pulled over by police at the intersection of Euclid Avenue and Indiana Street and arrested.

Jurors on Thursday also listened to the 911 call from the alleged victim, who is exercising her Fifth Amendment right to not testify during the trial.

"I've been assaulted ... my boyfriend hit me," she said, crying throughout the recording. She told the 911 operator that her face was bleeding. The 911 operator sent an ambulance and police to the alleged victim's home.

Bay County Sheriff's Deputy Ryan Christie testified that he took photos of the alleged victim while she was still in her driveway, just minutes after the incident took place.

Derek Westoby, a registered nurse at Bay Regional Medical Center, treated the alleged victim on the night of the incident. Westoby testified that the alleged victim told him she had lost consciousness, though she did not know for how long. Westoby also read from the alleged victim's chart that she had been diagnosed with assault and contusions of the head, face and chest.

Also entered into evidence were photos of Dore taken by Christie six days after the June 26 incident. Christie testified that those photos showed bruising of the upper right part of Dore's chest.

When asked by Assistant Bay County Prosecutor Scott Gordon why he waited six days, Dore said he didn't notice them for three or four days. He testified that the bruises also had been checked by his physician.

Trials in misdemeanor cases are rare, but Dore had said he preferred not to plea bargain and demanded a trial to clear his name. He is being defended by attorney Matthew L. Reyes.

On Thursday Dore told the court that in all his 72 years he has never struck another human being "except in the boxing ring, of course."

Dore is famous for his Toughman boxing competitions. He also owns Dore Enterprises and several other area restaurants and businesses.

Dore described his victim as his "lady-friend," saying she was normally an outgoing, sweet, nice person.

"But I would say that she has what I would call a hair trigger," Dore said. "She will immediately get mad and can't control herself."

He testified that she has physically attacked him several times previously, once giving him a black eye and once biting him on the hand.

Dore's grandson, Christopher Larocque, also took the stand, testifying that he called police in April after the alleged victim attacked Dore and one of his employees while they sat talking at the Big House Sports Bar, 510 E. Midland St.

"She just went crazy," Larocque said.

Before excusing jurors on Thursday, Kelly told attorneys that the trial already has taken too long and he wants it to finish up today.

Categories: [Courts and cops](#), [Front Page and Local](#)

Comments

workersunite says...

Jury deliberated less than an hour. NOT GUILTY!

Posted on 11/21/08 at 12:08PM

Footer



<http://www.simivalleyacorn.com/news/2008/1121/editorials/009.html>

Hunger happens, even in Simi Valley, and the food pantry needs your help

Californians have long looked at the economic struggles experienced in other parts of the country—places like Ohio and Michigan—as not affecting them.

But in this current economic downturn, even The "Golden" State is feeling it—even in areas generally considered affluent.

One thing's for sure: The crunch is being felt in Simi Valley. City Hall on Monday reported that revenue in the first quarter of fiscal year 2008-09 was down a whopping 18 percent over the same time last year, a greater drop than our fiscal-minded council accounted for.

While signs of the economic slowdown might not be quite as severe here as in other parts of the nation, we're certainly not immune. In fact, it's more troubling here than we imagine because it's easily overlooked.

Despite the fact that most of us still have jobs and continue to enjoy the good life we're accustomed to, hunger and poverty can and does happen, even in Simi Valley. And it occurs quicker than we think it does.

Last month the *Acorn* reported that in the past four months, the number of families Simi Valley Care & Share serves has risen dramatically, jumping from about 400 families to almost 1,400. At the same time, the number of donations coming into the food bank have decreased.

While the most recent Neighborhood Council-led food drive was a big success—resulting in the collection of around 11,000 items—more food is still needed.

Keep in mind, one of those families that's been forced to turn to Care & Share could be your next-door neighbor. You might not even know it. For pride or whatever reason, people who've never relied on food stamps or welfare programs might try keeping it a secret that they're in trouble. They may refuse to tell others about their plight, even immediate family members and friends. Senior citizens, especially, often hide their hunger, but they *will* go for help when the cupboards are bare.

Next week it will be Thanksgiving, and Christmas and Hanukkah are only five weeks away. Let's make sure that nobody goes hungry.

Donations are always accepted in person at Care & Share, 5924 E. Los Angeles Ave., Unit F. The food bank is open Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, call (805) 522-5676 or visit www.simivalley.org.

Obama's Presidency Opportunity to Address Poverty

By Cesar Chelala Nov 21, 2008

<http://en.epochtimes.com/n2/opinion/obama-poverty-us-health-7519.html>



A boy walks into the Capuchin Soup Kitchen November 19, 2008 in Detroit, Michigan. (Spencer Platt/Getty Images)

Barack Obama's success as president in confronting the needs of those in poverty will be the basis on which we will need to judge this new president.

In 2006, the poverty rate for minors in the U.S. was the highest in the industrialized world, with 30% of African American minors living below the poverty threshold. Moreover, the standard of living for those in the bottom 10% was lower than most other developed nations. 36.5 million people (approximately 1 in 8 Americans) were living below the poverty thresholds in 2006, compared to 31.1 million in 2000, according to official figures.

By several measures, the U.S. has one of the most inequitable health systems in the industrialized world. Despite widespread declines in infant mortality during the 20th century, the U.S. infant mortality rate—nearly seven babies die in the U.S. out of every 1,000 live births—ranks 29th worldwide, on a par with Slovakia and Poland and lagging behind Cuba. This figure should be compared with Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan where the rates are 2.0; 2.5 and 2.8 respectively.

The U.S. infant mortality rate, which hasn't declined significantly from 2000 to 2005, is now higher than in most other developed countries. This is one of the most important indicators of the health status of a nation, since it is associated with factors such as maternal health, quality and access to medical care, general socioeconomic conditions and public health practices.

The gap between the U.S. infant mortality rate and the rates of the countries with the lowest infant mortality is widening, which indicates that those countries are making better progress than the U.S.

The U.S. health care system is the most expensive in the world but comes in dead last in almost any measure of performance, according to a 2007 study by the Commonwealth Fund in New York. In addition, the U.S. also lags behind all industrialized nations in terms of health coverage.

46.6 million Americans had no health insurance coverage in 2005, according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau. 9 million children in the U.S. are uninsured, while 23.7 million—nearly 30 percent of the nation's children—lack regular access to health care.

Internationally

While employment, access to jobs and health care are critical issues at the national level, employing diplomatic measures to ensure a safer, more peaceful world are critical issues at the international level. That means, for the U.S., a return to a policy of respect for international law and treaties.

The U.S. should become a signatory of a treaty for the elimination of land mines. The treaty, known as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, had been signed by 2007 by 158 countries. The U.S. is not a party to that Convention.

The U.S. should also ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Governments that adhere to that convention are to report on their progress regarding the advancement of that convention and the status of child rights in their country. All U.N. member nations—except the United States and Somalia—have ratified the CRC.

Talking recently to an American friend who had been living in Spain for the last two years, I asked him about how Europeans see the situation in the U.S. “Europeans,” he told me, “are desperate to find reasons to love America again.” If he effectively addresses the challenges facing him, President Obama can help them fulfill their wish.

Cesar Chelala, a writer on human rights issues, is a co-winner of an Overseas Press Club of America award.

Last Updated
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Friday, November 21, 2008

Bush extends Michigan unemployment benefits by 20 weeks

Deb Price / The Detroit News

WASHINGTON -- President Bush signed a bill Friday that extends unemployment benefits by seven weeks, plus an additional 20 weeks in hard-hit states including Michigan.

Michigan's jobless rate now stands at 9.3 percent. The additional 20 weeks kick in once the unemployment rate in a state hit 6 percent or higher.

"This is really good news," said Tom Clementson, an Indian River road construction worker laid off a year ago.

"This will give my son and me a longer time to find a job. Nobody is hiring here," added Clementson, who exhausted his latest unemployment benefit checks six weeks ago. His son also lost his construction job.

Michigan's jobless rate is its highest since July 1992. The national average is now 6.5 percent.

"This is a shot in the arm for those Michigan workers who are struggling in this very challenged economy," Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm said. "And we are grateful to the Congress for providing this assistance."

The Senate passed the extension Thursday night by unanimous vote. The House passed the extension on Oct. 3.

The entire Michigan delegation supported the extension.

"These are very hard economic times," said U.S. Sen. Carl Levin, D-Detroit. "There are currently 429,000 unemployed people in Michigan."

You can reach Deb Price at dprice@detnews.com or (202) 662-8736.



Bipartisan bill would allow community colleges to train workers for specific new jobs without cost to employers

Posted by Sally York | The Flint Journal November 21, 2008 12:55PM

GENESEE COUNTY, Michigan -- A state plan aims to motivate local employers to create new jobs that pay a living wage -- despite a troubled economy.

And Mott Community College could benefit.

Here's how the bipartisan bill would work: Community colleges would train workers for specific new jobs at no cost to the employer.

Once the employees started working, their state income tax payments would be sent to the colleges until training costs were covered.

"This is a tool we can use immediately to expand existing businesses and provide incentives for new businesses to come here," said Rep. Richard Hammel, D-Mt. Morris Twp., who presented the plan with Republican Sen. Mark Jansen.

To be eligible, the jobs must pay at least \$14.80 an hour, twice the state minimum wage; or \$11.10 an hour plus health benefits.

"We want decent jobs that can sustain a living," Hammel said.

Employers would contract with community colleges for specialized training related to the new jobs. The colleges would sell bonds to fund the training.

Michael Kelly of MCC said the college supports the bill but has not made it a priority because few local employers are creating jobs in today's dismal economic climate.

"This is potentially a useful tool for local job creation," Kelly said. "It's certainly something we're interested in and will look into. But nobody is beating down our door for specialized job training."

Hammel said he recognizes that times are tough, but believes the plan could help the local economy.

"Everybody is struggling, but maybe some businesses could expand in a small way," he said.

At least two growing local businesses are interested. Azentek -- an automotive technology company in Grand Blanc Township since 2006 -- employs engineers, sales and marketing personnel and computer programmers.

"I think it sounds like a fantastic program," said Pete Muller, vice president of marketing at Azentek. "If we have the ability to take advantage of it, we certainly will."

Tom Panek, owner of Genesee Valley Windows, said he expects to create new jobs in marketing, shop trades and computers.

"I'm sure we'd find use for it," he said. "It would be beneficial not just to us, but to the whole community."

The program is patterned after the Iowa New Jobs Training Program, started in 1983.

To date, the program has done 2,000 training projects and helped to create 138,000 new jobs, according to Steve Ovel, executive director of governmental relations at Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids.

"It's been fantastic. It's one of the most important tools in our tool kit," said Ovel, who has met with Michigan leaders to discuss Iowa's program. "Our economy at the time was not dissimilar to Michigan's."

The bipartisan bill has passed the state House -- by a vote of 102-1 -- and is expected to sail through the Senate in early December.

Gov. Jennifer Granholm, who according to Hammel supports the proposal after initial concerns that the state would lose tax revenues, would have to sign the bill into law.

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Economist: Mich. facing deficit under recession

11/20/2008, 6:28 p.m. ET

By **KATHY BARKS HOFFMAN**
The Associated Press

ANN ARBOR, Mich. (AP) — School districts, universities and local governments that got more state money this year probably will have to give back some or all of that increase, Senate Fiscal Agency director Gary Olson said Thursday.

The director of the nonpartisan agency spoke to The Associated Press after listening to University of Michigan economists lay out their national economic forecast in Ann Arbor. The forecast for Michigan will be released Friday by the university.

With the school's economists saying the nation is in recession and no upturn is likely until mid-2009 or later, Olson said it's clear the state won't be getting as much tax revenue as predicted at the May revenue estimating conference.

He has been telling state senators to expect a \$450 million to \$900 million revenue shortfall in the current budget year, which started last month. He said some of the deficit will be covered by around \$400 million carried over from the past fiscal year, and added that \$650 million could come to Michigan from a stimulus package Congress is expected to pass after Barack Obama becomes president in January.

But Olson said the state can't rely on those one-time fixes and has to make cuts or raise taxes this year to avoid dealing with a "massive hole" in the fiscal 2010 budget, which starts Oct. 1.

"We may have to cut '09 to carry over a surplus to 2010 to be responsible," he said. Universities, community colleges, K-12 school districts, job training programs and local governments set to get higher state payments this year "should be worried."

Olson said the next budget year likely will be worse.

"We're going to have to make some pretty significant cuts if we don't have tax increases," he warned. "It's not going to be easy."

Michigan lawmakers last year raised the state income tax rate and placed a surcharge on business taxes in a bid to stop the recurrent revenue shortfalls caused by earlier tax cuts and the state's sluggish economy.

But the national recession could thrust the state back into an acrimonious battle over how to balance its budget this year as revenues shrink because of lost jobs and constricting consumer spending. Last year's action didn't come until after the state government shut down for several hours as lawmakers scrambled to reach an agreement.

Gov. Jennifer Granholm has said she expects to make cuts through executive orders by the end of the year, but was offering no specifics until her administration has time to weigh Friday's economic forecast.

"She'll be taking that information and sitting down with the budget director ... and his team, deciding on the best path to follow," Granholm spokeswoman Liz Boyd said Thursday.

The Democratic governor cut short a Mideast trade trip by a day so she could be in Washington, D.C., on Thursday to lobby Congress for a loan for to help struggling domestic automakers. Congress left without voting on a bailout, but could come back in early December to take up the issue again.

Senate Fiscal Agency: <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/sfa>

Gov. Jennifer Granholm: <http://www.michigan.gov/gov>